

From the Memorial Day weekend through the Labor Day holiday, we enjoy all types of warm-weather events, but summer is also a critical time for injuries. In fact, more mishaps occur during these 101 days than they do the rest of the entire year. The key to preventing summertime injuries is to utilize the same safe work practices and attitude we use on the job and apply them to our off-job activities.

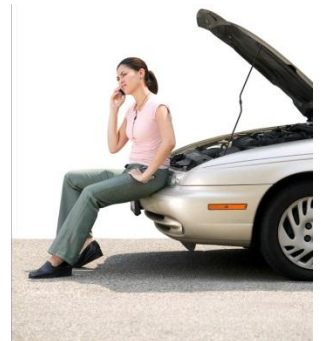
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PREPARING YOUR VEHICLE FOR SUMMER/VACATION

Before going on vacation or when the summer temperatures really start to heat up, it's a good idea to have your vehicle checked out by an automotive service professional.

- If you know how, you can inspect many items yourself by doing a pre-trip inspection.
- Check hoses, belts, radiator fluid and the oil. Also check wiper blades, air pressure in the tires, tire tread wear, brake lights and turn signals.
- Finally, make sure you know where the jack and spare tire are located and know how to use them in case you find yourself with a flat tire.



BUCKLING UP FOR SAFETY

Now that your vehicle is inspected, you're almost ready to go, but not before everyone is buckled up. Make sure everyone is buckled up before leaving the parking lot or driveway. Remember that young children must be properly secured in a child seat. Buckling up is the only way to give everyone a chance to survive in the event of a collision.

SAFETY TIPS CONCERNING CHILDREN

Each year, dozens of children and untold numbers of pets left in parked vehicles die from hyperthermia. Hyperthermia is an acute condition that occurs when the body absorbs more heat than it can handle. Hyperthermia can occur even on a mild day. Studies have shown that the temperature inside a parked vehicle can rapidly rise to a dangerous level for children, pets and even adults. Leaving the windows slightly open does not significantly decrease the heating rate. The effects can be more severe on children because their bodies warm at a faster rate than adults.

- Make sure your child's safety seat and safety belt buckles aren't too hot before securing your child in a safety restraint system, especially when your car has been parked in the heat.
- Never leave your child unattended in a vehicle, even with the windows down.

- Teach children not to play in, on, or around cars.
- Always lock car doors and trunks--even at home--and keep keys out of children's reach.
- Always make sure all children have left the car when you reach your destination. Don't ever leave sleeping infants in the car.

SUMMERTIME DRIVING TIPS

- Plan the route from your home to your vacation destination carefully before you leave. This will help avoid confusion out on the road.
- Keep in mind that warm weather tends to shorten attention spans and tolerance of other drivers. Maintain your composure and keep in mind that getting angry at another driver only makes it harder to think clearly and to drive safely.
- During summer travel, you will be driving in heavy traffic. Expect sudden stops, abrupt lane changes and distracted drivers.
- You will need to use all of your defensive driving skills to stay safe; do not allow yourself to be distracted by items in your car or by a cell phone.
- Always maintain a safe following distance and drive at a speed safe for the conditions and traffic level.
- Be cautious at all intersections; don't run through yellow lights and be sure all traffic is actually going to stop before pulling out on a green light.
- Finally, remember that you must never drive while being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. While many summertime activities often involve drinking socially, driving definitely isn't one of them.



PREVENTING SUNBURN

There are a variety of heat-related illnesses that may be experienced during the summer months, with the most common being sunburn. Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation causes sunburn. The longer the exposure, the worse the burn.

- Various types of sunscreens are available to protect our skin from the sun's harmful effects. In addition to helping prevent sunburn, wearing sunscreen is important for our skin's long term health and may help prevent skin cancer.
- The average person requires sunscreen with a rating of 30 SPF, but people with fairer skin should use a product with a higher rating. Reapply often, especially after swimming or sweating.
- Be vigilant keeping sunscreen on children. Children don't understand the danger until it's too late. Nothing can ruin a vacation faster than a room full of sunburned children.
- If you will be spending a lot of time in the sun, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing that covers the skin can provide even more protection. A wide brim hat also helps protect those frequently burned areas at the top of our head, ears, nose and forehead.
- The sun's ultraviolet radiation can also be harmful to our eyes. Protecting them by wearing sunglasses which filter out UV rays can reduce eye strain and make our time in the sun more enjoyable.

OTHER HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Of course, there are some heat-related illnesses that are more serious than sunburn. Heat stress and heat stroke can cause severe illness or death. It's important to know how to treat and prevent these heat-related ailments.

- In order to keep cool in the heat, your body has to sweat. By sweating you can lose up to a quart of water per hour. For your body to be able to keep cooling properly you should drink as much fluid as you lose, whether you're thirsty or not.
- Proper hydration can prevent the onset of serious heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- Sweating is part of the body's cooling process. If your body becomes dehydrated its cooling system cannot keep up with the heat, leading to heat exhaustion.
- Symptoms of heat exhaustion include profuse sweating, rapid breathing and blurred vision. People may also become agitated and make poor decisions such as refusing assistance.
- Heat stroke, a very serious condition, occurs when the body's cooling system completely shuts down. This causes the body's core temperature to increase rapidly.

- Symptoms of heat stroke include hot, dry skin. The skin is dry because the victim has lost the ability to sweat. They may also be delirious or go into convulsions. If left untreated, brain damage and death will occur as the body temperature continues to rise.
- If this occurs, call for immediate medical help. Quickly move the victim to a cooler location and douse with a steady flow of cool water until help arrives. If they are conscious, encourage drinking small amounts of cool water.

PARTICIPATING IN SUMMERTIME SPORTS

Many of us will participate in sports during the summer and this requires extra caution.

- First, it's important to warm up and stretch your muscles before participating in any type of sport. Proper warm up and stretching can prevent injury.
- Perhaps most importantly, stay within your limits. Many summer outings include pick-up games such as volleyball, kickball, soccer or softball. Many of us do not play these sports regularly and our bodies may not be conditioned for the running, diving or sliding that may occur.
- Many people, who would never think of taking a foolish chance at work, seem to have no problem laying it all on the line for a meaningless pick-up game.
- Many injuries occur when we "overdo" it in this manner. Remember, you don't make a living playing softball or kickball and trying to beat the throw to the plate is not worth suffering an injury and missing work.
- Just as there are several types of personal protective equipment that protect us at work, many summertime activities also require protective equipment. Make sure you understand what protective gear is required for any activity you participate in and wear it.

BICYCLE SAFETY

- Your safety depends on you. As a cyclist you have the same rights and duties as drivers. Obey traffic signals and stop signs. Ride with traffic and use the rightmost lane headed in the direction you are traveling.
- Make your intentions clear to everyone on the road. Ride in a straight line and don't swerve between parked cars. Signal turns and check behind you well before turning or changing lanes.
- Ride where others can see you and wear bright clothing. Use a front white light, red rear light and reflectors when visibility is poor. Make eye contact with others and don't ride on sidewalks.
- Anticipate what drivers, pedestrians and other bikers might do next. Watch for turning vehicles and ride outside the door zone of parked cars. Look out for debris, potholes and other road hazards. Cross railroad tracks at right angles.
- Check that tires are properly inflated, brakes are working, chain runs smoothly and quick release levers are closed. Carry tools and supplies appropriate for your ride and always wear a helmet.



FIREWORKS SAFETY

Follow these safety tips when using fireworks:

- Never allow young children to ignite or play with fireworks.
- Avoid buying fireworks that are packaged in brown paper because this is often a sign that they were made for professional displays and they could pose a danger to consumers.
- Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities. Parents don't realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees - hot enough to melt some metals.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.



- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.
- Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.

SAFE BARBEQUING

Another outdoor activity that requires some precautionary measures is barbequing or “grilling out”. Barbeque and grill mishaps result in more than 4,500 fires and 500 injuries each year; don’t let a fun activity like outdoor cooking be spoiled by a needless injury.

- Before using a gas grill for the first time this summer, make sure the cylinder hose and fittings don’t have any leaks. Turn the gas on slowly and then apply a soapy water solution to the hose and connections. Bubbles will appear if there is a leak. If you do discover a leak, turn the gas off and have the grill repaired. Do not use a grill that has a gas leak!
- Gas and charcoal grills must only be used outdoors. If used indoors or inside a tent, they pose both a fire hazard and the risk of exposing people to toxic gases.
- Place the grill in an open area and out of pedestrian traffic. Establish a three-foot safe zone around the grill and make sure any children understand they are not to enter this zone.
- Also, never leave a lit grill unattended. Have someone else bring you supplies if you are the designated cook.
- Never add lighter fluid to a charcoal fire once the coals have already been ignited and never use any other type of fluid to ignite the fire other than lighter fluid approved for grilling.
- If a gas grill doesn’t light right away, turn off the gas and allow the gas to dissipate before relighting.

FOOD SAFETY

Picnic and barbeque season offers lots of opportunities for outdoor fun. But these warm weather events also present opportunities for foodborne bacteria to thrive. As food heats up in summer temperatures, bacteria multiply rapidly. Safe food handling when eating outdoors is critical to protect yourself, family and friends.

Before you set out your picnic make sure hands and surfaces are clean. If you don’t have access to running water, simply use a water jug, soap and paper towels. Or consider using moist disposable towelettes for cleaning hands.



- Keep cold food cold. Place cold food in a cooler with ice or frozen gel packs. Cold food should be stored at 40°F or below to prevent bacterial growth. Meat, poultry, and seafood may be packed while still frozen so that they stay colder longer.
- Organize cooler contents. Consider packing beverages in one cooler and perishable foods in another. That way, as picnickers open and reopen the beverage cooler to replenish their drinks, the perishable foods won’t be exposed to warm outdoor air temperatures.
- Keep coolers closed. Once at the picnic site, limit the number of times the cooler is opened as much as you can. This helps to keep the contents cold longer.
- Don’t cross-contaminate. Be sure to keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood securely wrapped. This keeps their juices from contaminating prepared/cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw, such as fruits and vegetables.
- Clean your produce. Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water before packing them in the cooler - including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten. Rub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub with a clean vegetable brush while rinsing with running tap water. Dry fruits and vegetables with a clean cloth towel or paper towel.

Grilling and picnicking often go hand in hand. And just as with cooking indoors, there are important guidelines to follow to ensure grilled food reaches the table safely.

- Marinate safely. Marinate foods in the refrigerator - never on the kitchen counter or outdoors. In addition, if you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve a portion separately before adding the raw meat, poultry, or seafood. Don't reuse marinade.
- Cook immediately after "partial cooking." If you partially cook food to reduce grilling time, do so immediately before the food goes on the hot grill.
- Cook food thoroughly. When it's time to cook the food, have your food thermometer ready. Always use it to be sure your food is cooked thoroughly.
- Keep "ready" food hot. Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals. This keeps it hot but prevents overcooking.
- Don't reuse platters or utensils. Using the same platter or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood allows bacteria from the raw food's juices to spread to the cooked food. Instead, have a clean platter and utensils ready at grill-side to serve your food.
- Check for foreign objects in food. If you clean your grill using a bristle brush, check to make sure that no detached bristles have made their way into grilled food.

Keeping food at proper temperatures - indoor and out - is critical in preventing the growth of foodborne bacteria. The key is to never let your picnic food remain in the "Danger Zone" - between 40° F and 140° F - for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if outdoor temperatures are above 90° F. This is when bacteria in food can multiply and lead to foodborne illness.

Cold perishable food should be kept in the cooler at 40° F or below until serving time. Once you've served it, it should not sit out for longer than 2 hours, or 1 hour if the outdoor temperature is above 90° F. If it does, discard it. Foods like chicken salad and desserts in individual serving dishes can be placed directly on ice, or in a shallow container set in a deep pan filled with ice. Drain off water as ice melts and replace ice frequently.

Hot food should be kept hot, at or above 140° F. Wrap it well and place it in an insulated container until serving. Just as with cold food, these foods should not sit out for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour in temperatures above 90° F. If food is left out longer, throw it away to be safe.

WORKING SAFELY AROUND THE HOME

Summer is not one continuous vacation and cookout. For many of us summer means cutting grass, weeding, starting outdoor projects and home repair; not surprisingly these activities are also a source of summer time injuries.

- Dress appropriately for the job. You should wear sturdy shoes or boots.
- Long sleeve shirts and long pants offer protection from thorns, poisonous plants, debris thrown from lawn mowers or power tools and even insect stings.
- Be familiar with the operator's manual before using any electric or gas-powered lawn equipment. Always wear any personal protective equipment recommended by the equipment manufacturer such as safety glasses and ear plugs.
- Before using a lawn mower, remove sticks, stones and other debris from your lawn that could be thrown from the mower and injure you or anyone else in the area.
- Young children should never be in the yard while you are mowing and they should never be a passenger on a riding mower. More than 1,000 children are run over or backed over by lawn mowers each year.
- Before refueling gasoline-powered tools, allow the engine to cool down before fueling. Never try to fill the tank while equipment is running.
- Be sure to refuel machinery outdoors in an area with good ventilation and only store gas in an approved storage container.
- Of course, many tools are powered by electricity. Never use electric-powered tools in wet or damp conditions and always inspect extension cords for damage before use. Never use cords with exposed wires, cuts or nicks in the insulation or those with the ground pin missing.



SWIMMING SAFETY

Many of us flock to pools, rivers, lakes and beaches to cool off. Of course, these areas have their own hazards which we must be aware of in order to avoid injury.

- When going to the pool, lake or beach to swim, don't go alone. Take a buddy or make sure other people are present.
- Don't swim out beyond your ability to safely swim back, and be sure to alert yourself to local conditions such as drop-offs, currents or wildlife that may make swimming unsafe.
- Small children and non-swimmers should not be allowed to go around the water without supervision.
- Never dive into any water unless you are confident it is deep enough and free of obstructions. Many serious neck and spinal cord injuries occur from diving into shallow water.

POOL SAFETY TIPS

The National Safety Council reports that 600 children and adults drown annually in swimming pools, 330 in home pools. By communicating these pool tips effectively as well as using common sense, your backyard pool can be a safe and pleasurable experience for children as well as adults.

- Check local ordinances and codes for safety requirements.
- Use non-slip materials on the pool deck, diving board and ladders.
- The steps of the pool ladder should be at least three inches wide, and the ladder should have handrails on both sides small enough for a child to grasp. There should be a ladder at both ends of the pool.
- Electrical equipment should be installed by a licensed electrician in accordance with local safety codes.
- Check with a professional pool contractor to be sure the depth is sufficient for a diving board or slide. Always put a slide in a deep area of the pool, never in shallow water.
- There should be a fence at least six feet high around all sides of the pool with a locked gate to keep children out when there is no supervision. The fence should be constructed so that it is difficult to climb. Lawn furniture, trees and shrubs should not be close enough to provide an easy boost over the fence. Avoid using a side of the house as part of the fence; toddlers have wandered out through an open patio door or window and drowned.
- Mark water depths conspicuously. Use a safety float line where the bottom slope deepens.
- Above-ground pools: Install sturdy guard rails around the pool deck. Look for rolled rims on the metal shell to be sure the rims do not present a sharp cutting edge if someone falls. The access ladder to the deck should be sturdy and without protruding bolts or other sharp edges. The access ladder should swing up to prevent children from unauthorized entry or should be easily removable for secure storage away from the pool area.
- Check the pool and equipment periodically for cleanliness and good maintenance. Cover all sharp edges and protruding bolts; repair rickety or broken ladders and railings. Replace non-slip materials when they wear out.
- Teach children to float or swim as soon as possible.
- Always provide competent adult supervision when the pool is in use. No one should ever swim alone.
- Caution children against showing off and playing rough and explain the dangers of running and diving recklessly.
- Never push others into the pool.
- When using water slides, always go feet first.
- Before diving or sliding, check to be sure that other swimmers are out of the way.
- Keep rescue devices and first aid supplies near the pool. Teach children what to do in case of emergency. An alarm bell that could summon help would be a good idea.
- Keep electrical appliances such as radios out of the pool area because of the hazard of electrical shock.
- Never swim after drinking alcoholic beverages, eating or taking medications.

POOL SAFETY TIPS FOR PETS


There are basic rules you can follow to make sure pets are safe around the pool also. First, teach your pet where the steps in the pool are located in case he/she falls in or gets in trouble while swimming. Even pets that are

experienced swimmers can sometimes panic if they accidentally fall in the swimming pool. Pets that are too small to use steps should not be allowed in the pool.

- Install a fence around the pool.
- Use a pet-safe ladder in the pool so your pet has easy exit access.
- Pets should not be allowed around the pool without supervision.
- Pool covers are not a form of protection. Covers can be deceptive to pets as they look like a solid surface but can give out and lead to tragedy.
- Familiarize your pet with water at a young age; don't assume he/she can swim.
- Consider buying a pool alarm system. These float in the pool and go off when there is a disturbance in the water.
- Take your pet to the vet immediately if a near-drowning or water injury occurs.

SAFE BOAT OPERATION

Many people have the opportunity to operate various types of watercraft during the summer months. Be aware that watercraft has unique operating and handling characteristics. Also there are very specific "rules of the road" governing their operation.

- It's a good idea to take a boating safety course before operating any watercraft. In fact, many areas now require it.
 - Before leaving the dock, everyone in the boat should be fitted with a life jacket.
 - Don't overload your boat. Boats are only safe and stable when their capacity is not exceeded. Boats have a capacity plate mounted in plain view; take the time to check this information and do not exceed it.
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- When boating, let someone on land know where you plan to go and when you plan to return. This is valuable information if you do not return on time.
 - Do not allow passengers to ride while sitting on the bow or gunwales.
 - Always stay focused when driving the boat. Be on the lookout for other boats, swimmers and obstacles; maintain a safe speed for the conditions present.
 - Never drink alcohol while operating any type of watercraft. Just like driving a car, alcohol impedes your abilities and places everyone around you in danger.
- Remember that a boat has no brakes. Slow, careful operation is the key to safe maneuvering around docks and other boats.
 - All boat operators should take a boating safety course to learn the rules of safe watercraft operation.
 - At a minimum, you should understand that when meeting another boat head-on, it should be passed on your left or "port" side.
 - When meeting another boat at an angle, the boat on the right or "starboard" side has the right of way. Remember the saying "right is right".
 - When overtaking another watercraft, the boat being passed has the right of way. In normal circumstances, the boat with the right of way should maintain its course and speed; it's up to the other vessel to adjust course and speed to avoid a collision and maintain a safe operating distance. Of course, all boat operators have a duty to avoid collisions, even if you think you have the right of way.
 - Never force the issue. If it becomes apparent that the other boat is not yielding, take steps to avoid a collision.

SAFE OPERATION OF PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

Many people have the opportunity to operate personal watercraft during the summer. These are popular rental items at many beaches and lakes. These types of water vehicles are fast, fun and dangerous. They look simple to operate but can quickly lead a novice driver into dangerous situations.

- Have a skilled person instruct you in operation of the vehicle and read the operator's manual before heading out on the water.
- These vehicles are propelled by the thrust created by a stream of water being pumped by the engine. The

vehicle steers by directing this stream of water right or left when the steering wheel is turned. Many novice drivers get into trouble when they find themselves heading straight for a hazard and instinctively let go of the throttle to reduce speed. Unfortunately, when the throttle is off, the stream of water is stopped and the vessel cannot steer, often leading to a collision. To prevent this, operate personal water craft in open water, well clear of shore, docks, and other vessels.

- Always ride in control and in a predictable manner. Riding in a weaving, circular, and random pattern; especially in crowded waterways, makes it impossible for other boaters to predict which way you may go.
- Also, zipping back and forth to jump the wake of another boat, which is illegal in many areas, places you in a blind spot to other boaters who may not be expecting you to suddenly appear in front of them.
- On the water, collisions and fatalities involving personal watercraft are all too common during the 101 days of summer. Please operate these vehicles responsibly at all times.

UNIQUE & UNEXPECTED HAZARDS OF UNFAMILIAR AREAS

One danger of summer that is often overlooked is how often we find ourselves out of our normal environment. When traveling or visiting new and different areas, we are often not familiar with the unique hazards and safety rules that apply.

- For example, on a nice looking stretch of beach, a visitor might choose to take a quick swim; however, he or she could easily become the next victim of its dangerous currents and undertow.
- Many people play golf while traveling, and wouldn't think twice about retrieving a ball from the edge of this water, but the locals know better and gladly let the resident alligators keep any wayward balls.
- A quick hike before sunset can be the end of a perfect day camping. Just be sure you take the one-mile trail that loops back to camp rather than the 10-mile expert trail that leads over the mountain and has no water along the way.

These are just three examples; there are countless more. Without local knowledge, a visitor can easily place him/herself at risk. Similar to a job hazard analysis at work, before traveling it's a good idea to do a little research, ask some questions and read and obey any warning signs you encounter.

FIRST AID KITS

In order to be better prepared for emergencies, the American Red Cross recommends having a first aid kit for your home and car. Carry a first aid kit with you or know where you can find one while you are hiking, biking, camping or boating. Learn the location of first aid kits where you work.

Whether you decide to purchase a ready-made first aid kit or put one together yourself, it is important to check the kit regularly. Make sure the kit contains information appropriate to you and your family, such as a list of medications, allergies, and emergency phone numbers. Check expiration dates and replace any used or out-of-date contents. Store your first aid kit in a secure place out of the reach of young children. The American Red Cross recommends that all first aid kits for a family of four include:

- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5x9 inches)
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- 5 antibiotic ointment packs (approximately 1 gram)
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 2 packets of aspirin (81 mg each)
- 1 blanket (space blanket)
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)
- 1 instant cold compress
- 2 pair of nonlatex gloves (size: large)
- 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets (approximately 1 gram each)
- Scissors
- 1 roller bandage (3 inches wide)
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- 5 sterile gauze pads (3x3 inches)



- 5 sterile gauze pads (4x4 inches)
- Oral thermometer (nonmercury/nonglass)
- 2 triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- First aid instruction booklet

Resources:

National Safety Council

<http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers/Fireworks/>

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml>

<http://www.fda.gov/food/resourcesforyou/consumers/ucm109899.htm>

<http://www.swimmingpool.com/games-safety/pool-safety/pool-safety-guidelines>

<http://www.forcardrivers.com/quicktips.html>

<http://bikeleague.org/content/rules-road-0>

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/get-kit/anatomy>